the company, the Steel Authority of India had decided to shut down blast furnaces at Bokaro and Bhilai.

श्री राघवजी: मेरा जवाब नहीं आया। मध्य प्रदेश के तमाम कारखाने बंद पड़े हुए हैं या नहीं, यह तो मंत्री जी बताएं। **(व्यवधान)** मंत्री जी का जवाब तो पूरा होने दीजिये **(व्यवधान)** जवाब नहीं आया **(व्यवधान)**

श्री संजय निरुपम: मंत्री जी का जवाब नहीं आया **(व्यवधान)**

SHRI R.K. KUMAR : He has not replied about the impact of imports.

श्री वेद प्रकाश पी० गोयल: सर, मैं स्टील इंडस्ट्री से आता हूं। मंत्री महोदय ने कहा है कि यह एनुअल शट-डाऊन है, यह रिपेयर हो रही है। बाद में उन्होंने क्लेरीफाई किया है, एडमिट किया है कि वास्तविक कारण अलग है। उसको पहले छिपाया गया। आज दो सौ मिनि स्टील प्लांट बंद पड़े हुए हैं। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि इन सारे स्टील प्लांट्स को रिपेअर के लिए बंद करने के बजाय क्या इनके अपग्रेडेशन करने की कोई प्लान है ताकि आगे चल कर प्रोडक्शन बढ़ सके?

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, I would like to clarify that I am not misleading the House. From the very beginning, I have given a categorical answer that in the better technological and commercial interest of the company, blast furnaces at Bokaro and Bhilai have been shut down. I am not misleading the House, Sir. I have given an appropriate and correct information.

SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Would the Minister like to tell us about the upgradation which is going on in these plants?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Export of Rice by FCI

*21. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Food Corporation of India (FCI) exported rice in 1995-96 and 1996-97;

(b) if so, the quantum of rice exported by FCI in above mentioned two years;

(c) the quantum of rice to be exported by FCI in 1997-98; and

(d) the full details of such projections.

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The FCI has not directly exported rice in 1995-96 and 1996-97. However, against the authorisation given by the Government for export sale for the purpose of export upto 30 lakh tonnes of fine and superfine rice in 1995-96, and upto 5 lakh tonnes in 1996-97, FCI sold for the purpose of export to exporters, both in the Private and Public Sectors, a quantity of 14.90 lakh tonnes in 1995-96 and 0.52 lakh tonnes in 1996-97 so far.

(c) As of now there is no proposal for export or for sale for purpose of export of rice by FCI in 1997-98.

(d) Does not arise.

Recommendations of Abid Hussain Committee on small enterprises

*23. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAM GOPAL YADAV:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received the report of Abid Hussain Committee;

(b) if so, whether abolition of the present reservation system in the sector of small scale industries has been suggested in the report;

(c) the main recommendations of the Committee's report;

(d) whether the Government have since considered the recommendations of the report; and

(e) if so, decision taken by Government in this regard and if no decision has been taken, by when it will be taken ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) In addition to the recommendation for abolition of reservation of products for exclusive manufacture in the SSI Sector, major recommendations of the Abid Hussain Committee relate to raising the investment limit for SSI Sector, mechanism for promotion of small scale industries, focus on clusters, restructuring financial support for SSI Sector, integrated support services, support for technology development in small scale enterprises, infrastructure development in clusters and institutional and legal innovations and revitalising the District Industry Centres. Recommendations made by the Committee are being examined in consultations with relevant Ministries/Departments etc. After the receipt of the report, Government has already decided to raise the investment limit for plant & machinery in a SSI unit from Rs. 60/75 lakhs to Rs. 3 crores and that for a tiny unit from Rs. 5 lakhs to Rs. 25 lakhs, as recommended by the Committee. Earmarking a proper share of credit to the tiny sector within the priority sector lending is under active consideration of the Government for safeguarding their interest.

Families living on the earnings of Child Labour

*24. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether even half a century after the Independence and development efforts made through eight five year plans at least 110 million families in India live on the earnings of child labour;

(b) if so, how the number of families dependent on child labour have grown from plan to plan since the First Five Year Plan;

(c) the number of these children employed in hazardous industries, mines and other hazardous jobs; and

(d) the efforts made to do away with dependance on child labour, especially to eliminate child labour from hazardous industries and jobs as per Article 24 of the Constitution?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Authentic data on working children is generated through the decennial census. Information on the number of families which are dependent on the earnings of child labour is not generated in the census. The number of working children on the basis of the last three censuses was as under:

1971	10.75 million
1981	13.64 million
1991	11.28 million

The number of working children according to the latest census is 11.28 million. Therefore the question of as many as 110 million families being dependent on the earnings of child labour does not arise.